

No 162. Mr. apn.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND SICKNESS BENEFITS STATISTICS

Classification of Causes of Unemployment.

As from 1st July, 1946, the attached list of causes of unemployment will replace that previously in use.

The classification in use up to the present has not proved satisfactory due to the ambiguity of many of the titles (e.g. scarcity of work, lack of suitable employment, etc.).

All persons who are in receipt of unemployment benefit can, in the last analysis, be said to be unemployed because of scarcity of work and it is undesirable to have "scarcity of work" as one of the major groups in the cause of unemployment code.

The information required as the answer to this question is the reason for which the person originally became unemployed.

The reasons why employees lose or leave jobs are classified under three main headings:-

Discharges (which are subdivided into -
Disciplinary discharges
Other discharges.)

Lay-offs
Quits.

As some recipients of unemployment benefit will not previously have been employees, a further heading is provided to cover these cases:-

Not previously employed.

Discharges and lay-offs are separations on the initiative of the employer, the broad distinction being that a discharge is final and there is no likelihood of the person being re-engaged, at least in the near future. A lay-off is a separation of a more temporary nature due to some break in the continuity of the work and with the idea that the job will be available again for the employee as soon as circumstances permit.

Quits are separations which take place on the initiative of the employee.

The officer entering cause of unemployment on the Statistical Record or Variations History card should ensure that there is no ambiguity in the reason set down. He should bear in mind that the coder in the Statistician's Branch has to allocate the description given on the card to a specific code number and that the coding can be accurate only if the description is adequate.

Where there is any possibility of more than one interpretation being placed on any reason (e.g. medical unfitness, which may lead to discharge by the employer or to the employee quitting the job), the main heading applicable must be indicated. In these cases the following symbols may be prefixed to the reason in order to conserve space on the card:-

D.D. = Discharged for disciplinary reasons.
O.D. = " " other reasons.
L.O. = Laid off.
Q. = Quitted.
N.P.E. = Not previously employed.

The detailed classification is shown on the attached sheet. Officers are urged to use the descriptions contained therein whenever they are appropriate.

CAUSE OF UNEMPLOYMENT

1. Discharged for Disciplinary Reasons:

- 11. Striking
- 12. Going slow, encouraging go slow tactics
- 13. Absenteeism, bad timekeeping
- 14. Non-observance of staff rules, insubordination
- 19. Other

2. Discharged for other Reasons:

- 21. Medical unfitness for particular type of work, work too heavy, etc.
- 22. Inefficiency; incompetence, not elsewhere included
- 23. Establishment closed
- 24. Reduction of staff, permanent retrenchment
- 25. Reorganisation of work, displacement by new machine, etc.
- 26. Replaced whilst away sick, etc. (absence not due to strike or wilful absenteeism)
- 27. Replaced by reinstated ex-serviceman, relieving worker only
- 29. Other

3. Laid-off:

- 31. Breakdown, repair or overhaul of machinery, equipment, etc.
- 32. Electricity, coal or gas rationing; shortage of fuel or power
- 33. Shortage of materials
- 34. Operations interrupted as result of a strike (not direct participants)
- 35. Lock-out
- 36. Weather conditions, droughts, floods, rain
- 37. Seasonal work
- 38. Casual work
- 39. Other

5. Quitted:

- 51. Medical unfitness, work too heavy, medical advice
- 52. Sickness of dependants, domestic reasons, accommodation difficulties
- 53. Distance from work, travel difficulties
- 54. Dislike for type of work, desire for better position
- 55. Staff relationships, disagreement with employer, foreman, fellow-worker, etc.
- 59. Other

9. Not Previously Employed:

- 91. Youths
- 92. Employers, workers on own account, etc.
- 93. Ex-servicemen not yet returned to work
- 99. Other

EXPLANATORY NOTES ON DESCRIPTIONS MOST LIKELY
TO CAUSE MISUNDERSTANDING.

Code 11 (Striking), 34 (Operations interrupted by strike):

- 11 covers those who are discharged for participating in a strike, i.e., are not re-engaged by the employer after the settlement of the strike.
- 34 covers those who are laid off by the employer because a strike in one section of his work has affected continuity elsewhere.

Code 13 (Absenteeism), 26 (Replaced whilst away Sick):

- 13 covers wilful and unjustified absenteeism, etc. and does not include absences due to any sickness of the employee or of some dependant for whom he had to care, etc. The employer may not, in all cases, be fully aware of the circumstances and may, in fact, discharge for disciplinary reasons when the employee had some justifiable reason for his absence. In such cases classify to 26.

Code 14 (Insubordination, etc.), 55 (Disagreement with Employer, etc.):

The content of these two is similar - an employee who had a disagreement with his employer, etc. may be discharged or may walk out before action has been taken to discharge him. The classification will depend on who took the initiative; if the employer classify to 14, if the employee, to 55.

Code 21 (Medical unfitness, etc.), 22 (Inefficiency):

Any inefficiency apparently due to medical unfitness, physical disability, etc. should be classified to 21, any other inefficiency or incompetence which is not apparently connected with medical unfitness is classified to 22.

Code 21 (Medical unfitness), 51 (Medical unfitness):

The classification will depend on who took the initiative; if the employer classify to 21, if the employee, to 51.

Code 32 (Power rationing), 33 (Shortage of materials), 34 (Operations interrupted by Strike):

Classification 34 should be restricted to those persons laid off as a result of interruption of operations due to a strike in the establishment in which they themselves are engaged. Employees laid off in other establishments because of a shortage of materials should be classified to 33. General electricity, coal and gas rationing due to a major stoppage in the coal mines should be classified to 32. Thus in terms of the serious strike at the end of 1945, the steel workers at Lysaghts who were unemployed because of the strike of the sorters in the same establishment would be classified to 34. Employees laid off in other establishments would be classified to 33. Similarly engine drivers in collieries unemployed because of a miners' strike would be classified to 34 but persons unemployed in other industries because of interrupted coal supplies would be classified to 32.

Code 36 (Weather conditions), 37 (Seasonal work), 38 (Casual work):

- 36 covers persons unemployed because of more irregular weather factors such as droughts or floods. It includes building and construction workers who are laid off because of such weather conditions. 37 on the other hand includes those who become unemployed on the termination of seasonal work as usually understood, i.e., that which recurs with regularity year after year, e.g., fruit picking, shearing, sugar cane cutting, etc. 38 includes persons who normally move from job to job or from one employer to another and are unemployed for a period between jobs, e.g., waterside workers, building workers.

Code 27 (Relieving worker), 38 (Casual work):

The distinction between relieving workers who are taken on for a period to replace somebody who is absent and casual workers will frequently be difficult to make and must be left to the discretion of the person filling in the card. The safest general guide will be the nature of the work. Thus waterside work for which persons are picked up day by day for particular jobs which are offering is by its nature, casual work (Code 38). Factory work is of a more regular type and persons taken on temporarily to relieve temporary staff shortages or a temporary rush of work should be classified to 27 when they are discharged.